



News Release

WISCONSIN ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Some soldiers from 1157th Transportation Company diagnosed with scabies

Oshkosh-based unit returned from Katrina relief mission Friday

The Wisconsin National Guard learned Saturday that at least 20 soldiers of the Oshkosh-based 1157th Transportation Company have been diagnosed with scabies infestations. About 30 others reported rashes symptomatic of scabies infestation and have been advised to seek treatment for scabies. Scabies is an infestation of the skin with the microscopic mite *Sarcoptes Scabiei*.

The infestations were discovered Saturday morning, the day after the unit's return from two weeks duty supporting Hurricane Katrina relief efforts in Louisiana. The unit was based at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base New Orleans (Belle Chasse), about eight miles south southeast of the New Orleans central business district. Although based at the naval air station, many of the unit's soldiers conducted transportation missions into the city.

The Wisconsin National Guard temporarily kept all the unit's Oshkosh-area soldiers at the Oshkosh armory until National Guard medical officers and public health officials assessed the situation and made arrangements or recommendations for treatment. Those soldiers who returned to their homes outside the Oshkosh area are being contacted and advised to seek medical advice if they experience symptoms.

While the Wisconsin National Guard has not established a connection between the scabies infestations and environmental conditions in Louisiana, all other units performing recent hurricane relief duty in the Gulf Coast were directed to contact their soldiers and airmen so they can be advised to watch for symptoms.

In addition to affected soldiers, family members or others who may have been in close contact will be advised of their possible exposure so they can take appropriate preventive measures, watch for symptoms or seek treatment.

— more —

Scabies infestations diagnosed

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Scabies infestation is considered fairly common, occurs worldwide and affects people of all races and social classes. It is associated with pimple-like irritations and intense itching. Scabies is usually contracted by direct contact with infected persons — often while in crowded or close living conditions.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, scabies is treatable with one of several topical lotions. Frequent changes of clean clothing, bath towels and bedding are also recommended. Family members undergoing treatment are recommended to receive the same treatment at the same time to prevent reinfestation.

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NOTE TO EDITORS AND NEWS DIRECTORS: The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) prohibits release of any personal information about those soldiers who have been diagnosed or are being evaluated for possible exposure to scabies. The Wisconsin National Guard will not release the names of any Wisconsin National Guard soldiers or airmen who have been diagnosed with *Sarcoptes Scabiei* infestations or who are being evaluated for possible exposure.

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